

# Goals for a New Mainstream

## BACKGROUND

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The 22 goals of a sustainable food system form the backbone of the 2030 vision for the project. The goals are values-based descriptions, written in opportunities-based language, of the benefits a sustainable food and agriculture system provides. They can be considered an outline of the vision, a description of a sustainable food system in 22 short phrases. These goals served to guide the development of the sustainability indicators, the land use, value chain recommendations, the implementation strategy and other elements of the project. These goals were solicited from the first round of 65 interviews of leaders operating in the sustainable food and farm arena. The goals were then refined, added to and endorsed by the Roots of Change Council.

Of note, we did not solicit a definition of sustainability during the interviews, since so often efforts to achieve sustainability become overshadowed by the minutiae of how it is being defined. We instead used the question, “what would a sustainable food system look like?” as a way to stimulate a rich description of a sustainable future. The intention was to create a list of goals that embrace the essence of sustainability and provide a clear description of a sustainable food system.

## FINDINGS

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The Vivid Picture goals of a sustainable food system are listed below. Importantly, all of these goals must be met in order for the food system to be considered truly sustainable. The goals are listed here with their descriptions and underlying values.

### **A sustainable California food system will...**

#### ■ **Promote food choices that lead to healthy eating.**

In a healthy food system, freshness, nutrition and taste are primary goals and people eat a balanced diet with fresh whole foods that are produced and processed in ways that maintain high nutritional content. *(underlying values: health, safety)*

#### ■ **Provide easy access to healthy food from retail outlets for all eaters in California.**

In a sustainable food system, available transportation, household income, the existence of food outlets, social assistance and other factors make it easy for all Californians to obtain healthy food. *(underlying value: social equity)*

#### ■ **Provide affordable food for all eaters in California.**

In a sustainable food system, Californians are able to purchase healthy products at reasonable prices. *(underlying value: social equity)*

- **Provide for meaningful livelihoods and opportunities for all food and farming workers.**  
 In the future sustainable food system, people employed in California's food and agriculture sector have access to fairly compensated, dignified and meaningful work that provides a respectful and safe working environment as well as significant opportunities for personal development and advancement. *(underlying value: social equity)*
- **Facilitate continuous entry for beginning farmers, fishers, foresters, processors, retailers, restaurateurs and ranchers.**  
 The sustainable food system facilitates the transfer of businesses and reduce barriers to entry for newly establishing entrepreneurs, supporting new entrants and entrepreneurs in a variety of ways in starting up food initiatives and businesses. *(underlying values: regeneration, profitability)*
- **Provide eaters with foods produced and processed as close to home as possible.**  
 A sustainable food system encourages the availability of diverse foods produced in each region, promoting both successful regional food economies at home and focusing exports on complementary items that cannot be produced in the importing region. *(underlying values: diversity, interconnectedness)*
- **Encourage eaters to know where, how and by whom their food is produced.**  
 In a sustainable food system, people know where their food comes from, how and by whom it was grown, raised or caught, and how and where it was processed and packaged. *(underlying values: diversity, interconnectedness)*
- **Support deepening regional identities through food.**  
 In a sustainable food system, food and food production play a role in defining and deepening a sense of place and identity in a given region. They build market opportunities and generate demand for both unique and staple products. *(underlying values: diversity, interconnectedness)*
- **Honor and draw on the diversity and richness of different food cultures.**  
 A sustainable food system supports and encourages the rich variety of foods and food traditions in the state, providing fresh foods to all cultures and encouraging immigrant producers to maintain their livelihoods. *(underlying values: diversity, interconnectedness)*
- **Support and increase biodiversity in plant and animal products (including marine species).**  
 A sustainable food system provides people with real choice in the foods they eat. Not only are the products diverse, but within a product category, a range of crop and breed varieties are offered as well. *(underlying values: interconnectedness, diversity, regeneration, innovation, efficiency)*
- **Conduct farming, ranching, and fishing activities so that water, air, forests, and soil resources are enhanced and biodiversity and wildlife habitat are increased so that food production continues in perpetuity.**  
 In a sustainable food system, farming practices preserve and enhance wild and riparian areas, and successfully manage freshwater and marine food sources. *(underlying values: interconnectedness, diversity, regeneration, innovation, efficiency)*
- **Preserve farmland, forests, and oceans.**  
 In 2030, food production, processing and distribution do not undermine the health or quality of farmland or forest and ocean ecosystems. *(underlying values: interconnectedness, diversity, regeneration)*
- **Recycle its wastes and reduce the use of petroleum and other non-renewable inputs.**  
 The sustainable food system consumes as few input materials as possible (in particular non-renewable inputs such as fossil fuels) and minimizes its production of unwanted outputs (such as solid waste, effluent and air pollution). *(underlying values: interconnectedness, regeneration, innovation, efficiency)*
- **Employ humane practices in animal care.**  
 Animal production in the future sustainable food system adheres to high standards of animal welfare, encouraging a state of complete mental and physical health where animals are in harmony with their environment. *(underlying values: interconnectedness, innovation, efficiency, health and safety)*

■ **Provide opportunities for revenue from on-farm energy production, tourism, education, and other value added services (in addition to food production).**

Producers are able to supplement their income with value-added activities on their land, through services such as mentoring young farmers, contributing to smart development, and offering rural recreational activities. *(underlying values: social equity, regeneration)*

■ **Reward farmers, fishers, and ranchers for conservation services.**

A sustainable food system compensates farmers, ranchers, and fishermen for providing stewardship services other than day-to-day food production, such as wildlife habitat management, ecosystem service provision, energy production, compost generation, and recycling of urban wastes. *(underlying values: regeneration, profitability)*

■ **Provide opportunities for food, fishing, and farming operations to be profitable.**

In a sustainable food system, cooperation and transparency are encouraged among all actors in the value chain so that risks and rewards are shared, supply is managed, quality is maximized and all entities throughout the value chain have viable profit margins. *(underlying values: regeneration, profitability, interconnectedness)*

■ **Characterized by many locally owned and operated food and farming businesses.**

A sustainable food system will require a critical mass of businesses throughout the value chain that are owned and operated by local people who are vested in the community, having enough of the regional market share to provide economic resilience to the region and nurture community, innovation, accountability, and quality. *(underlying values: interconnectedness, regeneration, diversity, ownership, profitability)*

■ **Encourage business structures and forms of capitalization that provide investment and ownership opportunities to workers and community members.**

The sustainable California food system will promote community-based, community-owned and managed business models that foster a sense of investment among local members. *(underlying values: interconnectedness, regeneration, ownership, profitability)*

■ **Allow fishers, farmers, foresters, ranchers, processors, retailers and restaurateurs to retire from their business while maintaining their business as a family or locally owned asset.**

In a sustainable food system, producers are provided alternative exit strategies that facilitate the transfer of their operations to family members or other new entrants from the community. *(underlying values: interconnectedness, regeneration, ownership, profitability)*

■ **Promote efficient markets that share information and proceeds equitably among all players in the food chain.**

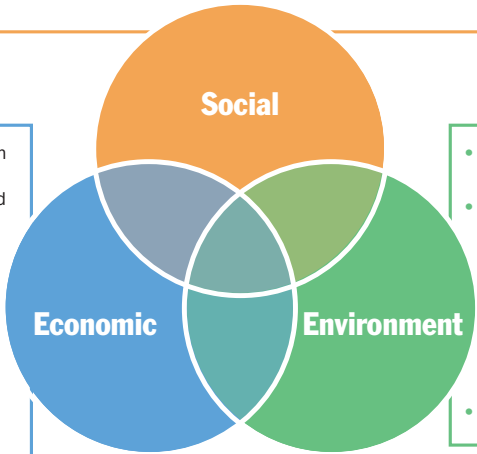
The future sustainable food system sees power and market share more equally distributed among links in the food chain as well as among actors at each level, and cooperation, partnership and information-sharing will be the norm rather than the exception. *(underlying values: interconnectedness, efficiency, innovation)*

■ **Allow businesses of all sizes to participate in the system as long as they are abiding by sustainable practices and principles.**

In 2030, the food system is structured in such a way that enterprises of all sizes are able to thrive; economic success is determined increasingly by fair and sustainable business practice. *(underlying values: interconnectedness, efficiency, innovation)*

Below, the goals are organized under the three traditional aspects of sustainability: social, environmental and economic.

- Promote food choices that lead to healthy eating.
- Provide easy access to healthy food from retail outlets for all eaters in California.
- Provide affordable food for all eaters in California.
- Provide for meaningful livelihoods and opportunities for all food and farming workers.
- Facilitate continuous entry for beginning farmers, fishers, foresters, processors, retailers, restaurateurs and ranchers.
- Provide eaters with foods produced and processed as close to home as possible.
- Encourage eaters to know where, how and by whom their food is produced.
- Support deepening regional identities through food.
- Honor and draw on the diversity and richness of different food cultures.



- Provide opportunities for revenue from on-farm energy production, tourism, education, and other value added services (in addition to food production).
- Reward farmers, fishers, and ranchers for conservation services.
- Provide opportunities for food, fishing, and farming operations to be profitable.
- Characterized by many locally owned and operated food and farming businesses.
- Encourage business structures and forms of capitalization that provide investment and ownership opportunities to workers and community members.
- Allow fishers, farmers, foresters, ranchers, processors, retailers and restaurateurs to retire from their business while maintaining their business as a family or locally owned asset.
- Promote efficient markets that share information and proceeds equitably among all players in the food chain.
- Allow businesses of all sizes to participate in the system as long as they are abiding by sustainable practices and principles.

- Support and increase biodiversity in plant and animal products (including marine species).
- Conduct farming, ranching, and fishing activities so that water, air, forests, and soil resources are enhanced and biodiversity and wildlife habitat are increased so that food production continues in perpetuity.
- Preserve farmland, forests, and oceans.
- Recycle its wastes and reduce the use of petroleum and other non-renewable inputs .
- Employ humane practices in animal care.